CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

[c01] A method of providing communications services, comprising the steps of:

conducting an online auction for the communications services, the online auction conducted via a distributed computing network; and

presenting a rating of the communications services, the rating indicating whether the communications services were satisfactorily provided, the rating presented during a subsequent online auction to indicate that a future communications service will be satisfactorily provided.

[c02] A method of providing communications services, comprising the steps of:

bidding via an online auction to provide the communications services;

providing the communications services; and

receiving a rating of the communications services, the rating indicating whether the communications services were satisfactorily provided.

[c03] A method according to claim 2, wherein the step of receiving the rating comprises receiving feedback regarding a recipient of the communications services, the feedback indicating whether the recipient was satisfied with the communications services.

[c04] A method according to claim 2, wherein the step of receiving the rating comprises receiving the rating from a client communications device associated with a user of the communications services.

[c05] A method according to claim 2, further comprising communicating a recipient rating regarding a recipient of the communications services, the recipient rating indicating whether the recipient satisfactorily paid for the communications services.

[c06] A method according to claim 2, further comprising presenting the rating during a future online auction, wherein the rating is used to indicate that future communications services will be satisfactorily provided.

[c07] A method according to claim 2, wherein the step of providing the communications services comprises:

i) receiving a first data stream comprising packets of data packetized according to a packet protocol,

ii) segmenting the first data stream into segments,

iii) dispersing the segments via a communications network for subsequent processing services,

iv) receiving results of the processing services,

v) aggregating the results of the processing services into a second data stream, and

vi) communicating the second data stream via the communications network.

[c08] A method of providing communications services, comprising the steps of:

receiving a bid for the communications services, the bid received during an online auction conducted via a distributed computing network;

providing the communications services; and

receiving a rating of the communications services via the distributed computing network, the rating indicating whether the communications services were satisfactorily provided.

[c09] A method according to claim 8, further comprising auctioning a block of time of usage.

[c10] A method according to claim 9, wherein the block of time comprises at least one of i) a maximum data transfer rate and ii) a minimum data transfer rate.

[c11] A method according to claim 8, further comprising auctioning a block of time of usage, wherein the block of time may be shared between multiple recipients of the communications services.

[c12] A method according to claim 8, further comprising auctioning a block of time of usage, wherein the block of time may be shared between multiple telephone numbers.

[c13] A method according to claim 8, further comprising auctioning a block of time of usage, wherein the block of time may be shared between multiple client communications devices.

[c14] A method according to claim 8, further comprising auctioning a block of time of usage, wherein the block of time may be shared between multiple client communications devices associated with multiple users.

[c15] A method according to claim 8, further comprising negotiating with a group of recipients for the communications services, the group comprising recipients willing to pay for the communications services and recipients unwilling to pay for the communications services, wherein the recipients willing to pay for the communications services are permitted to sponsor the recipients unwilling to pay for the communications services.

[c16] A method according to claim 15, wherein the step of providing the communications services comprises providing the communications services to both recipients willing to pay for the communications services and recipients unwilling to pay for the communications services.

[c17] A method according to claim 8, wherein the step of receiving the rating comprises receiving the rating from a recipient of the communications services, the rating indicating whether the recipient was satisfied with the communications services.

[c18] A method according to claim 8, further comprising presenting the rating during a future online auction, wherein the rating is used to inspire trust in other recipients that their future communications services will be satisfactorily provided.

[c19] A method according to claim 8, wherein the step of providing the communications services comprises:

i) receiving a first data stream comprising packets of data packetized according to a packet protocol,

ii) segmenting the first data stream into segments,

iii) dispersing the segments via a communications network for subsequent processing services,

iv) receiving results of the processing services,

v) aggregating the results of the processing services into a second data stream, and

vi) communicating the second data stream via the communications network.

[c20] A computer program product, comprising:

a computer-readable medium; and

an Analysis Module stored on the computer-readable medium, the Analysis Module receiving a bid for communications services, the bid received during an online auction conducted via a distributed computing network, the Analysis Module initiating the communications services, and the Analysis Module receiving a rating of the communications services, the rating indicating whether the communications services were satisfactorily provided.